

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOGADI 00803 130712Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 MCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 /083 W
-----116965 132212Z /70

R 121132Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6155
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0803

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINS, MILY, SO
SUBJ: POSSIBLE EXECUTION OF SOMALI MILITARY OFFICERS

REF: STATE 092266

1. WE TAKE IT THAT AFP STORY OF THE EXECUTIONS OF EIGHTY SENIOR SOMALI OFFICERS WAS PICKED UP HERE IN MOGADISCIO BY AFP REPORTER LAURENT CHENARD WHO HEARD THE SAME RUMOR WE DID AS REPORTED IN MOGADISCIO 0731. WE ATTEMPTED TO CHECK THAT STORY WITH OUR ONE RELIABLE MILITARY SOURCE, AND WERE TOLD THERE MAY BE SOME TRUTH IN IT, BUT OUR INFORMANT HAD NO SPECIFICS. HE DID THINK THE FIGURES WERE GREATLY EXAGGERATED.

2. IN HIS ARMY DAY ADDRESS ON APRIL 11, VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE SAMATAR EXPLICITLY DENIED THE STORY WHICH HE CALLED QUOTE BASELESS LIES ... SPREAD BY FOREIGN NEWSMEDIA THAT THERE IS DISCONTENT AMONG THE SOMALI NATIONAL ARMY END QUOTE. SAMATAR SAID IT WAS A CHEAP LIE THAT EIGHTY OFFICERS WERE SHOT IN HARGEISA. HE DID SAY THAT SIX OFFICERS WHO HAD AN OPEN TRIAL THERE WERE FOUND GUILTY OF A CRIME AGAINST THE COUNTRY WERE SENTENCED. HE DID NOT SAY WHAT
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THEIR FATE WAS.

3. WE CANNOT COMMENT ON THE RELIABILITY OF ABDIRAZAK HAGI HUSSEIN'S INFORMANTS, BUT CAN ONLY ADD THAT THERE HAVE NEVER BEEN AS MANY WILD RUMORS AND STORIES AFOOT IN MOGADISCIO AS THERE ARE AT PRESENT. ONE CAN HEAR ALMOST ANY EXPLANATIONS OF THE CAUSES AND RAMIFICATIONS

OF THE COUP ATTEMPT THAT ONE DESIRES. SOME OF THESE TALES ARE OBVIOUSLY REACHING ANTI-SIAD SOMALIS OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY. WE HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO REPORT THEM BECAUSE WE CANNOT SUBSTANTIATE WHAT IS CLEARLY COFFEE HOUSE AND BAZAR SPECULATION.

4. TO BALANCE OUR SKEPTICISM, WE HAVE A REPORT TODAY, APRIL 12, FROM A LOCAL EMPLOYEE WHOSE FIRST COUSIN'S ARMORED FORCE OFFICER HUSBAND WAS APPARENTLY EXECUTED IN MOGADISCIO THIS MORNING. THE STORY FROM OUR EMPLOYEE, WHO OBTAINED IT FROM THE TEARFUL MOTHER OF THE DECEASED, IS THAT THE OFFICER, ONE OF ALLEGEDLY FORTY SHOT TODAY, WAS A JUNIOR OFFICER OF THE 12TH TANK BATTALION, THE UNIT THAT LED THE APRIL 9 COUP. THE STORY OF THE ONE DEATH HAS A TRUTHFUL RING AND FITS THE PATTERN OF SUNDAY'S EVENTS. VERIFICATION OF THE FATE OF THE OTHER 39 WILL REQUIRE FURTHER INQUIRY.
LOUGHRAN

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